



News Release

Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests &
Thunder Basin National Grassland
<http://fs.usda.gov/mbr>

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Medicine Bow National Forest Opens Some Low Elevation Campgrounds

(LARAMIE, Wyo.) May 20, 2013 – Due to the return of near-normal snowpack conditions, Medicine Bow National Forest visitors will find limited access to roads, trails and campgrounds this Memorial Day weekend.

Preparations have been underway on the Brush Creek/Hayden, Douglas and Laramie Ranger Districts to open many lower elevation campgrounds for the upcoming holiday weekend. In certain cases, visitors will be welcomed back to sites that have seen significant work or have even been closed as a result of hazard trees from the beetle epidemic that swept across the Forest over most of a decade.

Campgrounds to be opened on the Brush Creek/Hayden Ranger District include 6-mile, French Creek, South Brush Creek, and Ryan Park. Due to remaining snow drifts and down trees, this weekend's status for the Bottle Creek, Bow River, Jack Creek and Lincoln Park Campgrounds is less certain, although crews continue to work towards opening them. Lower elevation portions of some main Forest roads are open, but most secondary roads remain closed. Please call the District Office in Saratoga at (307) 326-5258 for details and the most current information.

Esterbrook, Friend Park, and Curtis Gulch Campgrounds will open for Memorial Day weekend on the Douglas Ranger District. For more information and details about these recreation sites and open roads, please contact the Douglas Ranger District at (307) 358-4690.

The Laramie Ranger District expects to have most of its Pole Mountain recreation sites open by this weekend, including the Vedauwoo Day-Use Site, Vedauwoo Campground, Blair Picnic Area, Yellow Pine Campground, and Hidden Valley Group Site. Forest Road 540 to Lake Owen is open and can be accessed from the north end of Forest Road 517. On the Snowy Range, only the Willow Campground may be open in time for the coming weekend. Visitors are also advised that Barber Lake will not be filled for the upcoming weekend and perhaps not for the entire summer. This is due to the unavailability of diversion water. For the most current information and details about these and other recreation sites and roads, please call the Laramie Ranger District at (307) 745-2300.

On all three districts, day-use fees are \$5.00 and daily campground fees are \$10.00. Some campgrounds may not yet have water, so campers should plan to bring their own water.

Campground reservations may be made at some sites through ReserveUSA by phone at 877-444-6777 or online at www.recreation.gov. Where available, reservations are recommended for holiday weekends such as Memorial Day.

Recreation site information may also be found on this website, <http://fs.usda.gov/mbr>, or you can follow the Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests and Thunder Basin National Grassland on Twitter, [@MBRNFsTBNG](https://twitter.com/MBRNFsTBNG).

Many campgrounds and roads are still inaccessible due to snowpack or because of ongoing work to remove beetle-killed hazard trees. Please respect these closures and do not try to drive around snow banks or barriers.

Remember that weakened or dead trees can fall without warning, endangering people and blocking roads. Recreationists need to watch out for falling or high-risk trees, especially in high winds.

Although conditions are much improved compared to last year and no fire restrictions are currently in effect, visitors are reminded to be careful with campfires and follow these basic fire safety rules.

- Scrape back dead grass and forest materials from your campfire site.
- Keep your campfire small and under control; make it only as big as you need it.
- Keep a shovel and a water container nearby to douse escaped embers.
- Put your campfire dead out before leaving your campsite or going to sleep.
- Fireworks are not allowed on federal lands.

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